



# **Local Roadways: The City System**

Washington State Transportation  
Commission

October 19, 2004

**Mary Place, Councilmember,  
City of Yakima**

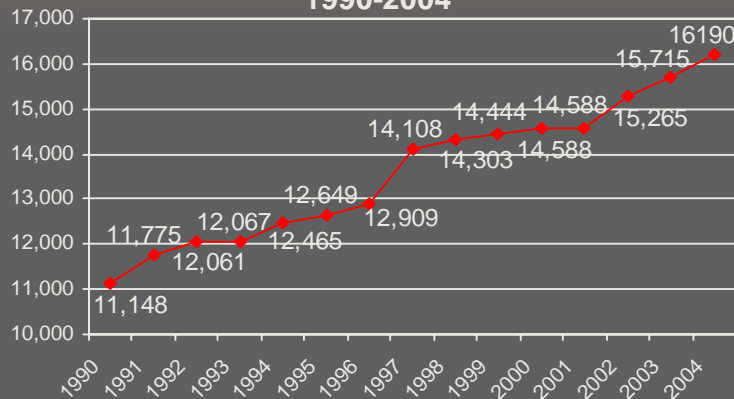
**AWC President**

**Tim LaPorte, P.E.  
Engineering Manager  
City of Kent**

*This presentation was prepared and presented by the Association of Washington Cities and may not be representative of the Washington State Transportation Commission and the Department of Transportation's viewpoint.*

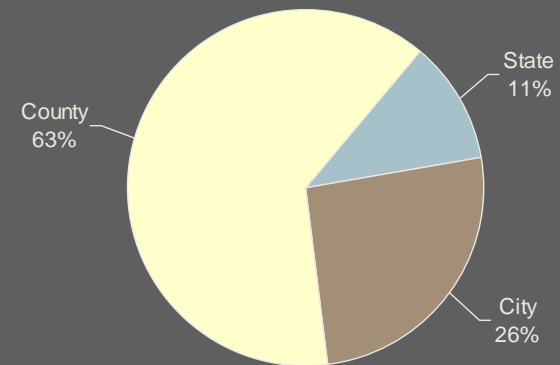
# City Overview: Our Street System

Growth in City Street Centerline Miles  
1990-2004



45%  
Increase

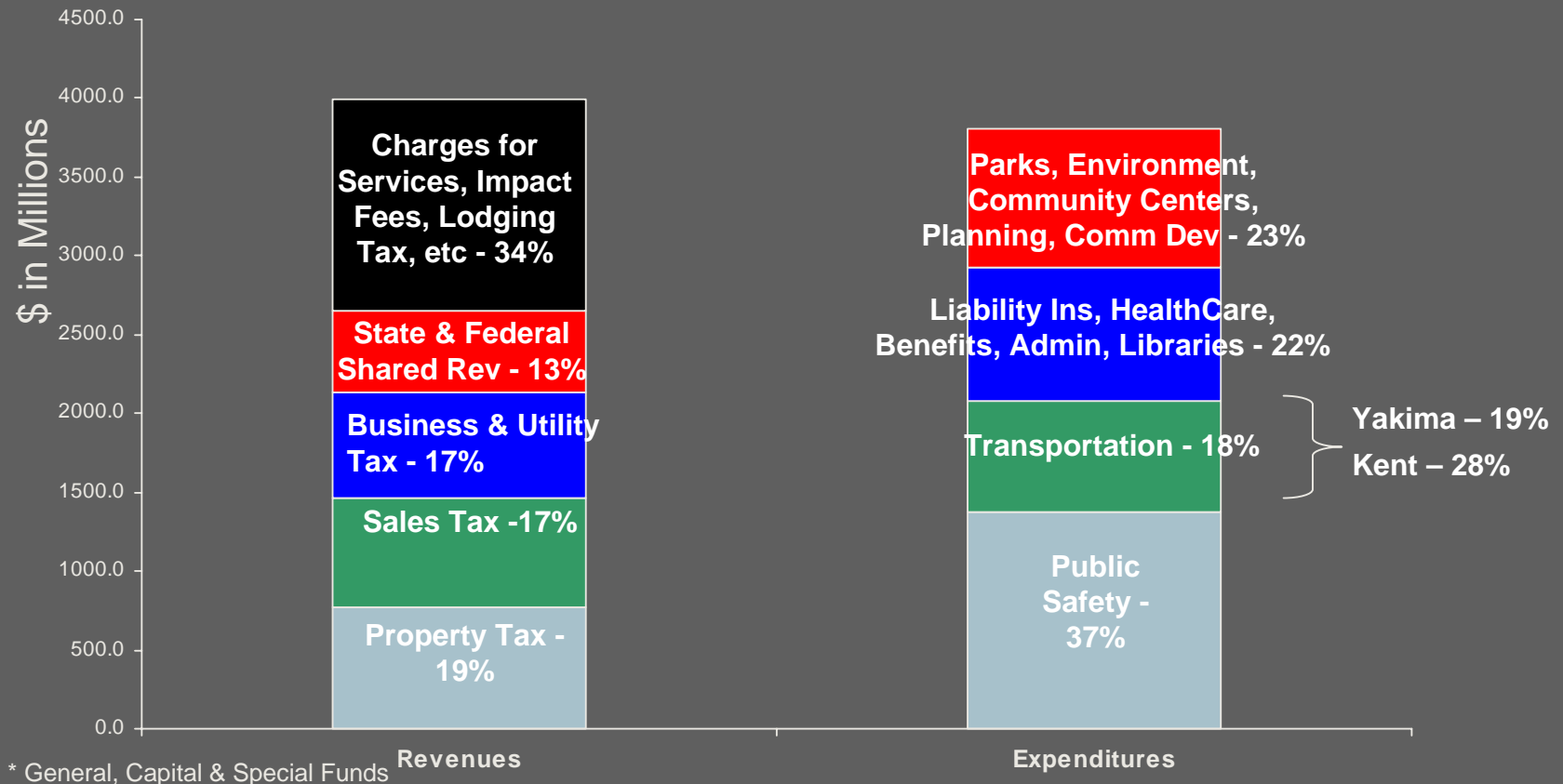
Lane Miles by Category



- ➔ Centerline miles of city streets have increased by 5042 miles (41%) since 1990.
- ➔ 94% of city centerline miles are paved streets.
- ➔ 657 bridges (bridge replacement cost at \$350 sf, is \$1.88 billion).
- ➔ When a state highway runs through a city of 22,500 and over, state mandates require the city to assume costs for maintenance, signalization, ADA and most traffic control. (503 centerline miles)
- ➔ Cities also provide signalization, sidewalks, streetlights and other appurtenances.

# City Overview

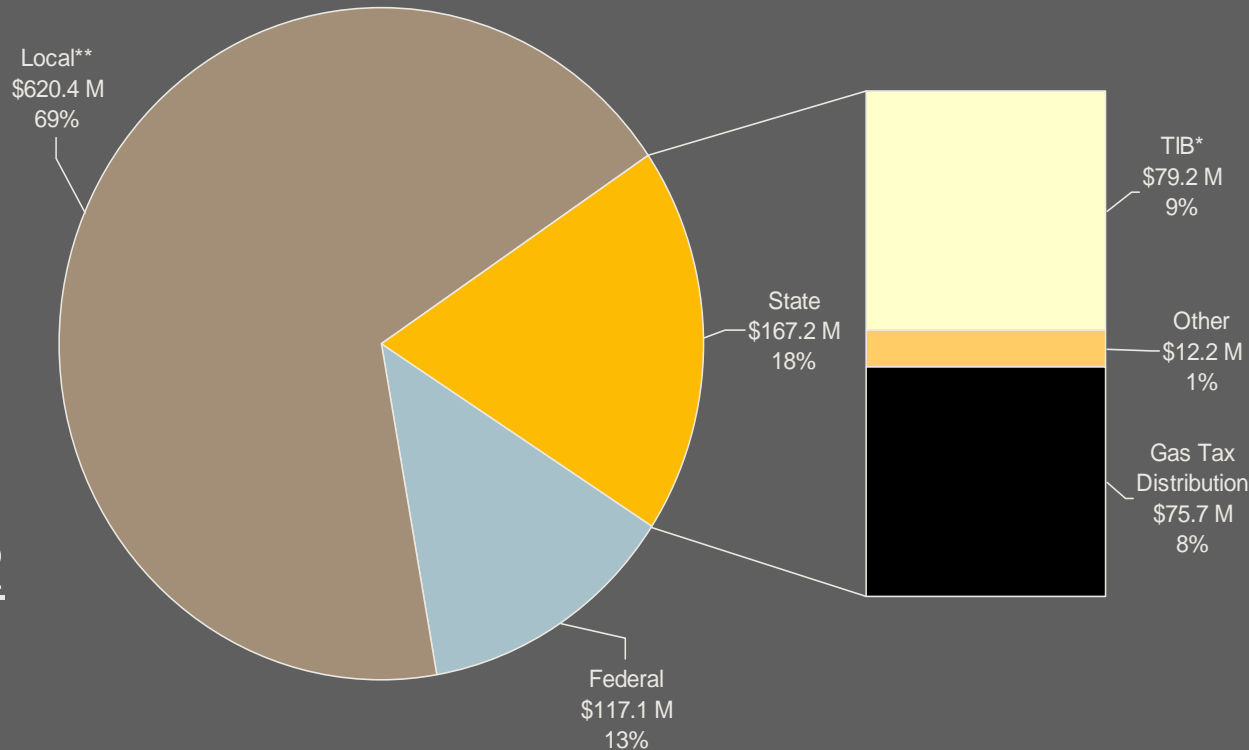
## 2002 City Operating\* Revenues & Expenditures – Revenues = \$4.0 Billion



# City Overview:

**City Transportation Revenues – 2002 – \$904.7 Million**

**Local Funds Pay for Streets**



	<u>1991</u>	<u>2002</u>
Local	65%	69%
State	30%	18%
Federal	5%	13%

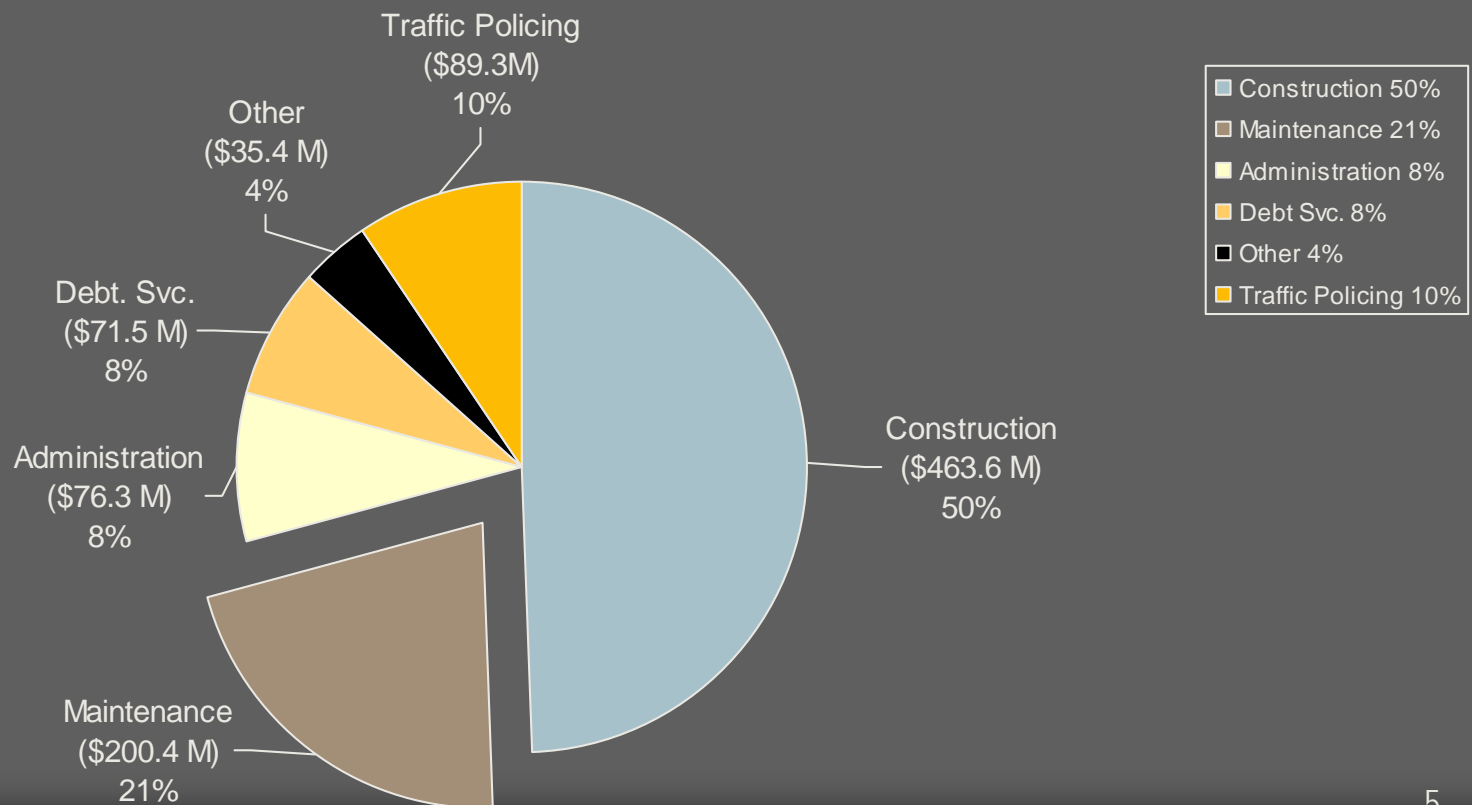
\* 13.4% of TIB funds were spent on state highways

\*\* includes Local Revenue Sources and Public Works Trust Fund Loans

# City Overview:

## City Transportation Expenditures – 2002 – \$936.5 Million

In 2002, cities invested \$936 million on transportation -- \$200 million for street maintenance alone. Yet this covers only one-third of ongoing needs and does not address a critical maintenance backlog.



# Washington's Transportation Plan

You asked us:

- ⇒ Have we identified the right issues?
- ⇒ Have we collected the right data?
- ⇒ Do we interpret the data the right way?
- ⇒ What are the implications for capital investment?

# Washington's Transportation Plan: Right issues? Right data? Right look?

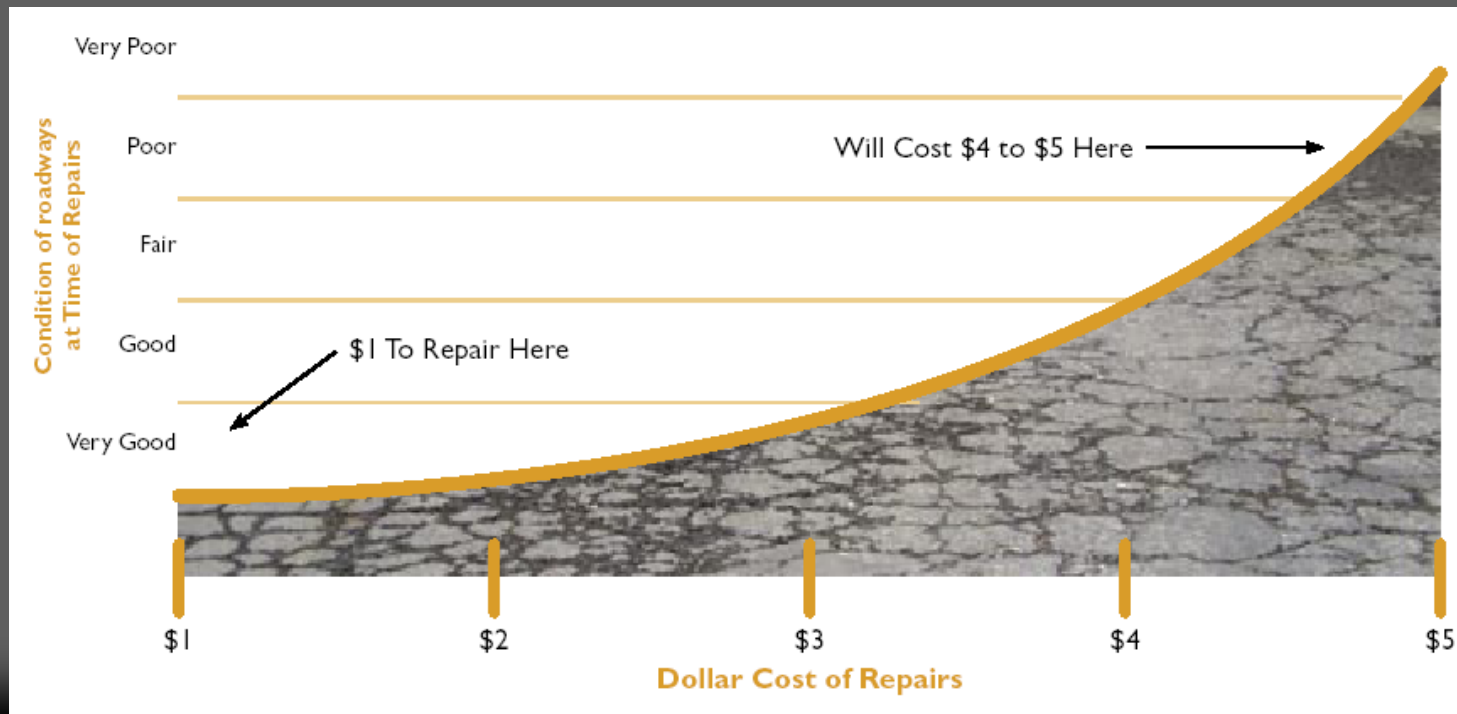
## System Preservation:

**On Local Roadways:** “Local governments face large shortfalls in preserving their pavements and bridges, with local transportation funding being squeezed by reductions, growing costs, and expansion needs. Supporting data on preservation needs of local roadways is improving.”

# Washington's Transportation Plan:

## Right issues? Right data? Right look?

- ➡ We now have arterial data: Preliminary reporting shows 70% of our arterials have an average rating of 73 out of 100. We are on the edge between preservation and increased rehabilitation.
- ➡ The cost of inaction is high. As our city streets and arterials deteriorate, the cost to repair or replace doubles every 10 to 15 years.





# Washington's Transportation Plan: Right issues? Right data? Right look?

## System Development and Efficiencies

"Grided streets and complete networks improve overall transportation efficiency in urban and urbanizing areas."

"Transportation demand management plays an important role in transportation efficiency."

- ✓ We agree. New funding for a local corridor program/network connectors is needed.
- ✓ Increase transportation demand management funding.

# Washington's Transportation Plan: Right issues? Right data? Right look?

## Safety

"Pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorcyclists are disproportionately represented in fatality rates and need to be addressed in the safety strategy."

✓ We agree. The \$1 million for the safe routes for school program is a step in the right direction.

# Washington's Transportation Plan: Right issues? Right data? Right look?

## Transportation Access:

"Street side access to transit is not adequate in many urban and urbanizing areas."

- ✓ We agree. Looking forward, a partnership between the cities, transit providers and state assistance is required.

# Washington's Transportation Plan: Right issues? Right data? Right look?

## Bottlenecks and Chokepoints

- ✓ We agree with findings and emerging directions. But a focus and acknowledgment on local system impacts is also required. Chokepoints/bottlenecks on state highways redirects highway traffic to local streets. This results in local bottlenecks and level of service impacts cities cannot afford to address.

# Washington's Transportation Plan: Right issues? Right data? Right look?

## Strong Economy and Good Jobs

✓ Agree with statewide perspective.

*“Our cities are where most of our jobs are. As cities collaborate to grow prosperity in every region of our state, their ability to take care of transportation basics is challenged as never before. Investment in basic city infrastructure is a requirement for our state to be as competitive as it can be.”*  
**Bob Drewel, Executive Director,  
Puget Sound Regional Council**

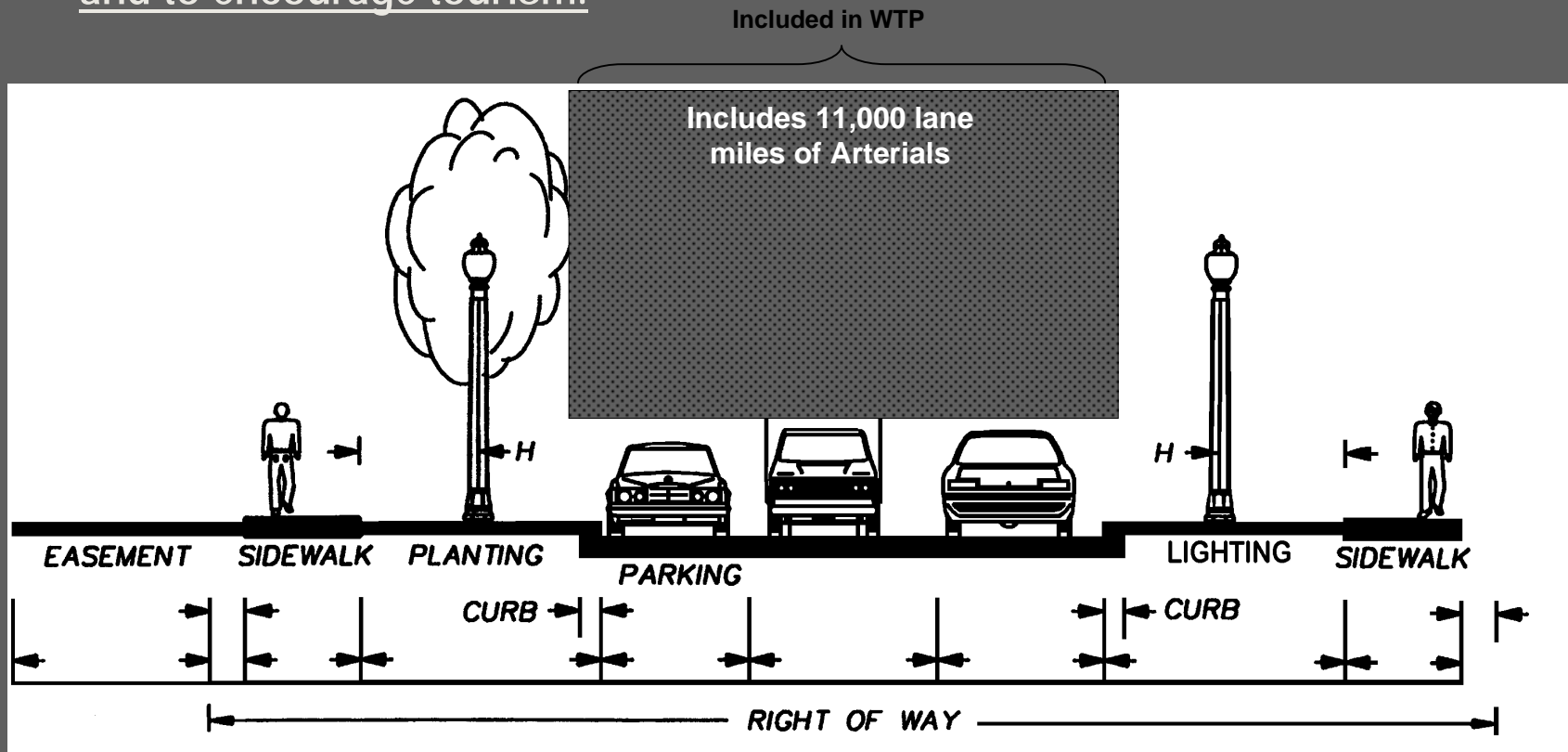
*“Nearly every trip in this state begins or ends on a city street. If we continue to fall further and further behind in the basic upkeep of our local roads and bridges, our citizens and our economy will pay a heavy price for decades to come.”*

**Juli Wilkerson, Director,  
Community Trade and  
Economic Development**

# Strong Economy and Good Jobs

A new statement is required:

State highways frequently serve as “main street” for our cities. Design flexibility is necessary to ensure consistency with a local community vision and to encourage tourism.



City Transportation Facilities are more than “curb to curb.”

# Washington's Transportation Plan: Right issues? Right data? Right look?

## Moving Freight

"Setting aside through freight movement, all freight movements begin and end on the local system."

- ✓ We agree with findings and emerging directions. As a future step, strategic investment in gateways, regional producers, manufacturers and distribution centers must have unrestricted funding to address multi-modal freight needs.

*"While the State is working to address problems on our state highways, we face an equally serious threat on our city streets. Freight haulers need both a strong local road system and a good highway network to get our products to market, get our people to work and stay competitive. If one part of the system doesn't work, the entire network begins to fail."*  
**Larry Pursley, Executive Vice President, Washington Trucking Associations**

# **Washington's Transportation Plan: Right issues? Right data? Right look?**

## Health and the Environment

- ✓ We agree with findings and emerging directions.



# Building Future Visions: We need to act, and act now.



- ➡ Washington's deteriorating city streets and bridges threaten our economic future and quality of life.
- ➡ Acting now to reverse the steady decline of our city transportation systems will save taxpayers millions of dollars in the long-run.

# Building Future Visions: Act Now

## Less State Support, Fewer Local Options

- ➔ A 2003 Nickel Package with no new gas tax distributions for cities, a departure from past legislative practice.
- ➔ Drastic transportation funding cuts from statewide initiatives, with cumulative city losses projected at \$1.2 billion by 2007.
- ➔ Discontinuation of the Small City Paving Program, which funded 157 cities and paved 160 miles of streets.
- ➔ Discontinuation of the City/County Corridor Congestion Relief Program.
- ➔ Transportation Improvement Board revenues are limited - only \$1 is granted for every \$8 requested.
- ➔ Loss of the Street Utility Fee, \$15 Vehicle Licensing Fee option and lack of dedicated freight mobility funds.



# Act Now: Every City Is Affected, Regardless of Size or Location

- ➔ Streets in newly incorporated and annexed cities need major investments to meet urban standards.
- ➔ Larger economic centers need major improvements for congestion relief, freight mobility, and earthquake protection - requiring a level of investment that local resources alone cannot meet.
- ➔ Many intermediate and smaller cities serve as a through corridor for commuting workers, resulting in extraordinary congestion.
- ➔ Small rural communities are unable to fund the most basic resurfacing projects and cannot afford even modest improvements to their streets.
- ➔ Eastern Washington cities face freeze/thaw cycles that accelerate street deterioration.





# Solutions:

- ➡ To solve these problems, Washington cities need an injection of direct state dollars and new local funding options. The last such action by the State Legislature was in 1990.
- ➡ Tri-Association Partnership (Cities and Counties) is working together to provide a unified transportation proposal.
- ➡ State legislative actions could include:
  - New gas tax distributions. For example, even with a 5 cent increase to cities, it would take 6 years to return the state baseline investment to 1991 levels.
  - Future gas tax distributions that ensure a fairer return to cities, which handle a disproportionate amount of the state's employment and commuter traffic.
  - A fund to provide pavement assistance for 178 cities under 5,000. Currently, it would take decades for these smaller cities to fund a major transportation project.
  - Increase funds for the Transportation Improvement Board (TIB), a key city transportation funding partner.
  - Dedicated funding for freight mobility--critical to keeping our State competitive in the global economy.
  - Reinstating a Corridor Program to assist with multi-jurisdictional corridor needs.

# Solutions (cont.):

➔ Additionally, cities need new local transportation funding options to meet urgent and growing needs. These could include:

- Re-enactment of the \$15 vehicle license fee.
- Local option gas tax for cities (if counties and RTIDs do not utilize)
- Street utility authority.
- Other locally implemented options, including Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) charge, weight-based fees, etc.

